

Old Dairy Factory

Dairy Farm Road, Palmerston North

NZHPT Registration Number: 7180
NZHPT Registration Type: Historic Place – Category I
NZHPT Registration Date: 24/06/94
City/District Council: Palmerston North City Council
District Plan Status: Category 1



Brief History

This was the first of three founding buildings designed by Auckland-based architect Roy Alstan Lippincott for the new Massey Agricultural College established in 1926. The building was constructed to house a model dairy factory for the manufacture of cheese and butter and laboratory facilities for research. The dairy and research facility was the top priority of the new college, and the design was completed in 1926. Construction work by Trevor Bros Ltd. began in 1928 and the building was opened in 1929. The rectangular, single storey, hipped roof building is constructed of reinforced concrete with concrete floors and a wooden truss system supporting a Marseilles tile roof. The broad low eaves are suggestive of the Arts and Crafts movement. Mouldings on either side of the windows can be interpreted as a Maori motif and terminate as a relief dado to sill height. The interior was designed to ensure a hygienic environment. Skylights provide light to areas of the building that do not receive sufficient light from windows, and the centre of the roof supports a small pyramidal lantern.

Massey Agricultural College and the Dairy Research Institute shared the building until 1931, and the factory continued to be used for students' training and research until 1967. Several internationally recognised developments in dairy technology, including the isolation of bacteriophages in New Zealand cheese starters in 1935 and the vacuum pasteurisation of cream for butter making in 1950s, were pioneered in the building.

During the 1970s, the building was occupied by NZ Pharmaceuticals who developed export-earning products from meatworks waste. Massey University sold the building to DSIR in 1988.

It is currently leased by AgResearch Ltd to the Bio Commerce Centre, a biotechnology business incubator. The partial restoration of the building in 1992 earned it the Western Branch Award for Architecture in the NZIA-Resene Awards for sympathetic restoration. The building has historical importance as a symbol of the recognition and acceptance of the role of research in the development of the agriculture industry and is architecturally noteworthy as one of three founding buildings of the Massey Agricultural College designed by noted architect Roy Lippincott.

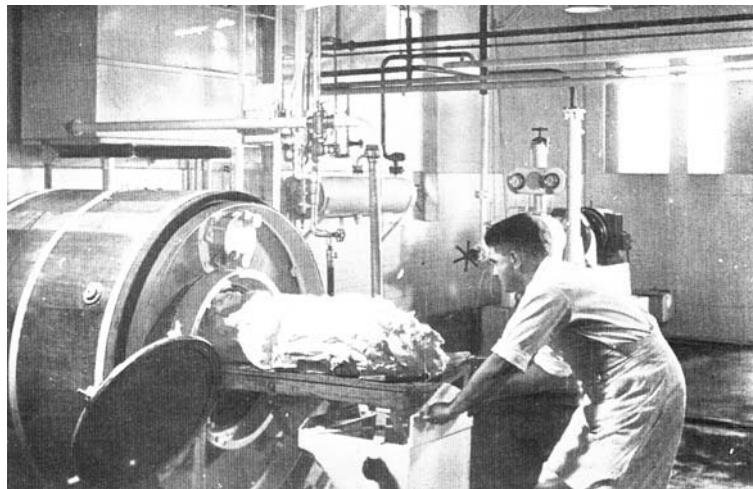
Principal Sources:

NZHPT File, Dairy Research Institute, Palmerston North 12012-84.

Upgrade Report: Old Dairy Factory (nd).

New Zealand Historic Places Trust, *Proposal for Classification: Buildings Classification Report*. 1993.

Palmerston North City Library Photograph Collection D60, 63-73;Grass 2.



BUTTER-MAKING, Massey Agricultural College, New Zealand